Strengthening of the Press Council of India

*317. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to strengthen the Press Council of India to make it more effective, through legislation or otherwise; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) There is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise.

Setting up of Science and Technology Council

*318. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether an autonomous Science and Technology Council for ensuring purchase/import of latest highgrade technology is being set up and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) the type and nature of representation likely to be given on this Council and the manner in which it is likely to operate in practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Indian capital in swiss banks, etc.

*319. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:
SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated amount of unaccounted Indian Capital deposited in the Swiss Banks and held in other foreign holdings abroad at present;

(b) the steps taken so far in this regard; and

(c) whether there has been any attempt to probe the matter and if so, the findings thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (c) Government has been aware of the clandestine deposits in foreign banks by unscrupulous elements, Banks accepting such deposits have their law of secrecy and do not disclose the details even if requested. Therefore, it is not possible to estimate the unaccounted Indian capital abroad.

The Enforcement Directorate of the Government of India is engaged in various operations to detect transfers of funds out of India in violation of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act. Raids and prosecution of persons violating FERA have been stepped up.

Levying of a tax on Inter-State consignment of goods

*320. SHRI VITHAL BHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was a proposal to levy a tax on the interstate consignment of goods;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a Committee of Chief Ministers has recently arrived at a consensus in respect of levying of a tax on consignment goods; and

(c) if so, by when Government propose to introduce a Legislation to levy a consignment tax?